

**S-E-C-R-E-T**

14 June 1969

25X1 [REDACTED]

1. [REDACTED] 25X1

25X1 [REDACTED] "The Soviet Buildup Against China: Dimensions and  
Implications" will be forwarded by pouch; [REDACTED] 25X1

25X1 [REDACTED]

2. Note that this memo does not represent [REDACTED] 25X1  
position nor is it a national estimate. The following three  
paragraphs are a summary of the memo:

3. The continuing buildup of Soviet conventional and  
nuclear capabilities opposite China has already far exceeded  
the level appropriate to meet "border class" requirements.  
By the end of the year, Soviet theater forces along the China  
border will be stronger than those deployed in Eastern Europe.  
Further, there are some indications that strategic nuclear  
delivery systems will be part of the array of Soviet military  
power oriented toward China.

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4. While the size and nature of the buildup seems disproportionate to any threat the Chinese now pose, it is evident that the Soviets take possible future contingencies very seriously. The Soviet forces will provide a strong deterrent to Chinese military adventures. Should deterrence fail or should Soviet security interests so dictate, those forces will be capable of punitive action, limited objective conventional war, tactical nuclear war, or even a general nuclear assault on China in conjunction with strategic strikes.

5. Whether or not these forces are ever used, their creation and maintenance will inevitably affect Soviet forces opposite NATO; at a minimum, planned improvements to those forces will be delayed or stopped, and it is possible that their capabilities may be degraded. Moreover, the Soviet strategic concern reflected in the buildup in the East may already be having far-reaching effects on the other areas of Soviet policy, particularly in Europe.

6. The memo addresses the Soviet estimate of the threat from China in broad terms only. It states that the Soviets probably regard China as massive, hostile,

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irrational and worst of all close. It points out that the Soviet military advantage over the Chinese will be badly eroded as Chinese nuclear capabilities grow.

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